

7/8" vs. 7/8-18 Tie Rods: What's the Difference & Why It Matters for Your Off-Road Steering Setup

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Upgrading your steering system can be overwhelming—especially when you’re faced with numbers like $7/8$ ” and $7/8$ -18. At first glance, they might seem identical, but they’re **not**.

If you’re upgrading your **Dana 44 steering**, building a **crossover steering kit**, or running **35”+ off-road tires**, understanding this difference can save you from costly mistakes and trail-side headaches. And when it comes to **premium off-road steering solutions**, [East West Off-Road](#) is a trusted name among serious 4x4 builders.

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What Does $7/8$ ” Mean in Tie Rods?

When someone talks about a $7/8$ ” *tie rod*, they’re referring to the **diameter of the threaded portion** of the rod.

Why this matters:

- **Thicker rod = stronger steering**
- Better for **off-road rigs** running large tires
- Prevents bending during **rock crawling** or heavy trail use

□ *Example:* A factory tie rod might bend after one hard hit. A **$7/8$ ” heavy-duty tie rod**, like the ones available from [East West Off-Road](#), can handle far more abuse.

What is $7/8$ -18 in Tie Rods?

This is where the confusion begins. $7/8$ -18 still has a **$7/8$ -inch diameter**, but the “18” refers to **thread pitch** — meaning **18 threads per inch**.

Think of it like this:

- **$7/8$ ”** = diameter only
- **$7/8$ -18** = diameter + thread pitch

Why thread pitch matters:

- Ensures correct fit for **tie rod ends**, **tube inserts**, and **jam nuts**
- Avoids mismatched parts that won’t fit—or worse, fail during a trail ride

Why Matching Thread Pitch Is Critical

Let's say you buy a DOM steel rod labeled $7/8"$. Then you order tie rod ends with $7/8-18$ threads but tube inserts with $7/8-14$.

Result: Nothing fits together.

Mixing mismatched threads can lead to:

- Installation delays
- Stripped threads
- Potential **steering failure**

□ **Pro Tip:** Always confirm **diameter AND thread pitch** before ordering. With [East West Off-Road](#) kits, all components are matched to work together seamlessly, so you avoid these problems.

Left-Hand vs. Right-Hand Threads - The Adjustment Hack

Many off-roaders run **one right-hand (RH)** and **one left-hand (LH)** threaded end on a tie rod.

Why?

- Adjust **toe alignment** without removing parts
- Just loosen jam nuts and spin the rod like a turnbuckle

Before buying parts, ask yourself:

- Is it **RH or LH thread**?
 - Does it **match the opposite end**?
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Quick Reference Table - Tie Rod Specs

Term	Meaning	Why It Matters
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7/8"	Rod diameter	Bigger diameter = stronger steering
7/8-18	Diameter + 18 threads per inch	Must match ends & inserts
RH / LH Threads	Thread direction	One of each = easy alignment

Final Thoughts - Build It Right the First Time

If you're building an **off-road steering upgrade** for serious trails, don't skip the details.

- Match **tie rod ends** to **tube inserts**
- Choose the correct **thread pitch** (e.g., *7/8-18* for one-ton ends)
- Use **LH + RH threads** for easier adjustments later

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Small details like **thread pitch** can make or break your steering setup—on the trail and in your garage.

FAQs - People Also Ask

Q1: Is a 7/8" tie rod stronger than stock?

Yes, a 7/8" tie rod is significantly stronger than most factory tie rods and is better suited for off-road use with large tires. Brands like [East West Off-Road](#) offer high-quality options built for tough terrain.

Q2: What's the difference between 7/8" and 7/8-18?

7/8" is the diameter, while 7/8-18 includes both diameter and thread pitch (18 threads per inch).

Q3: Can I mix 7/8" and 7/8-18 parts?

No, thread pitch must match exactly, or the parts won't fit—or worse, will fail during use.

Q4: Why use left-hand and right-hand threads?

Having one LH and one RH thread allows for quick toe adjustments without removing the tie rod.

Q5: Do I need 7/8-18 for one-ton tie rod ends?

Yes, most one-ton tie rod ends require a 7/8-18 thread pitch, and you can find compatible parts at [East West Off-Road](#).

Updated High-Traffic Keywords

7/8 tie rod, 7/8-18 tie rod, heavy duty steering kit, Dana 44 steering upgrade, East West Off-Road, off-road steering parts, tie rod ends, left-hand right-hand threads, DOM steel tie rod, crossover steering kit, one-ton tie rod ends, 4x4 steering upgrade, off-road suspension and steering, steering kit for big tires, heavy duty tie rod ends, rock crawling steering parts